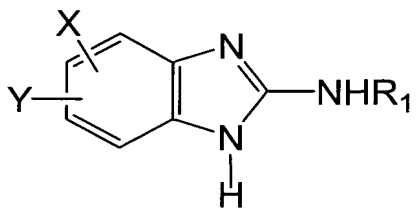
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for treating a viral infection in a warm-blooded animal comprising administering to the warm-blooded animal a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of the following formula:



wherein,

R_1 is $-COOR_3$ or $-CONHR_3$;

when R_1 is $-COOR_3$,

R_3 is haloalkyl, alkenyl, haloalkenyl, cycloalkyl, cycloalkalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, heterocycloalkalkyl, substituted or unsubstituted benzyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, poly(alkoxy)alkyl, hydroxyalkoxyalkyl, hydroxypoly(alkoxy)alkyl, haloalkoxyalkyl, halopoly(alkoxy)alkyl, or aminoalkyl;

when R_1 is $-CONHR_3$,

R_3 is alkyl, haloalkyl, alkenyl, haloalkenyl, cycloalkyl, cycloalkalkyl, heterocycloalkyl, heterocycloalkalkyl, substituted or unsubstituted benzyl, hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl, poly(alkoxy)alkyl, hydroxyalkoxyalkyl, hydroxypoly(alkoxy)alkyl, haloalkoxyalkyl, halopoly(alkoxy)alkyl, or aminoalkyl; and

each of X and Y is independently hydrogen, alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, haloalkyl, haloalkenyl, halogen, nitro, or amino;

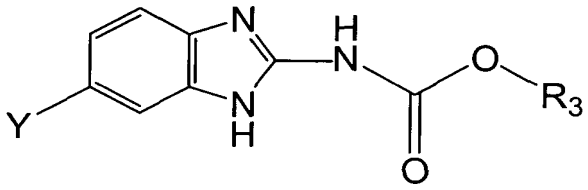
a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof or a prodrug thereof.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is in the form of a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

3. A method according to claim 2 wherein said pharmaceutically acceptable salt is a hydrochloride salt.

4. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is in the form of a prodrug thereof.

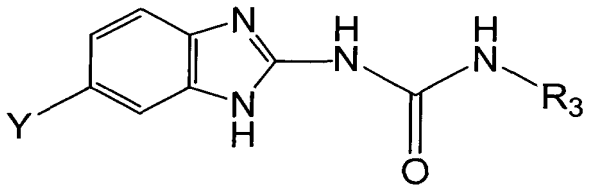
5. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is of the following formula **A-3**:



A-3 .

6. A method according to claim 5 wherein Y is hydrogen or chloro, and R_3 is selected from the group consisting of alkyl, alkenyl, oligo(alkoxy)alkyl, and substituted or unsubstituted benzyl.

7. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is of the following formula **A-4**:



A-4 .

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein Y is hydrogen or chloro, and R_3 is selected from the group consisting of alkyl, alkenyl, oligo(alkoxy)alkyl, and substituted or unsubstituted benzyl.

9. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is micronized and is suitable for administering to said warm-blooded animal by injection.

10. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is administered in an amount of from 10 mg/kg body weight to 10,000 mg/kg body weight.

11. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is administered orally, enterically, intravenously, peritoneally, or by injection.

12. A method according to claim 1 wherein said compound is administered in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

13. A method according to Claim 1 wherein said compound is coupled to a soluble polymer.

14. A method according to Claim 1 wherein said compound is coupled to a biodegradable polymer.

15. A method according to Claim 1 wherein the viral infection is due to an RNA virus.

16. The method according to Claim 15 wherein the RNA virus is a human immunodeficiency virus.